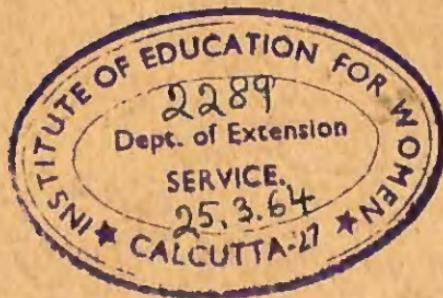


**Handbook of Suggestions for Teachers**

# **The Cumulative Record Card**

**D. Mahanta**



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**New Script  
Calcutta**

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Maha

THE  
**Cumulative Record Card**



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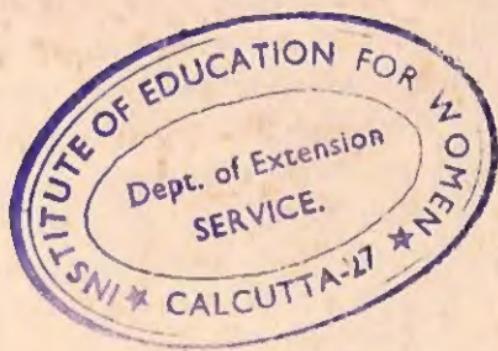
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To  
The Struggling  
Teachers  
of  
Our Schools



## PREFACE

The Board of Secondary Education, West Bengal, has taken a bold step, by way of examination-reform, to introduce two new tools—the cumulative record card and the objective tests—in our schools. These tools, introduced quite a long time ago in many of the progressive countries, have been found to be very useful. It is, therefore, expected that introduction of these two tools in our State would also contribute to the improvement of our examination system in particular and of the education system in general.

But the practical implications of these two changes, especially those of the cumulative record card, should be carefully considered. Teachers and administrators of our secondary schools, who will have to shoulder the great responsibility of properly maintaining these record cards as well as of utilising the information entered therein to the best advantage of the individual pupil and the society, must be made fully conscious of the underlying implications. The content-structure, the relevant methods of study and the procedures for recording the data must also be explained to them in details.

This booklet is primarily intended to give our teachers the necessary background that may help them see 'things' in the proper perspective and act accordingly with greater confidence and understanding.

I must admit that I am heavily indebted to many an educationist of the State whose useful advice

has helped me gain a better insight into the problem. I am also grateful to some of my teacher-friends whose encouragement has inspired me to give its 'solution' a concrete shape.

Most of the contents of the booklet were published earlier in the form of a series of articles in the '*Teachers' Quarterly*', a very useful organ of the Department of Extension Services, Institute of Education for Women, Calcutta. Thanks are due to the authorities of that Department for their kind permission to use the articles as the basis of this booklet.

I know that I have tried to study the problem in my own way and that my way of looking at it may not always turn out to be a very good one. Opinions vary in regard to many important aspects of the problem ; controversies are also there. I would, therefore, be looking forward to my readers for their useful comments, valuable suggestions and even criticisms to know that all my labour is not lost.

**D. MAHANTA**

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## The Cumulative Record Card

### 1. *Examination Reform in Secondary Education and the Cumulative Record Card :*

Immediately after we achieved independence in 1947, we started thinking in terms of reforms of the prevailing system of education. The University Education Commission and the Secondary Education Commission were set up in 1948 and 1952 respectively. The Secondary Education Commission, with which we are mostly concerned here, stated in their report that every Indian citizen must be equipped with the knowledge, skill and abilities that would be essentially needed for the satisfactory discharge of his or her duties and responsibilities. The Commission suggested inter alia that the system of internal examination obtaining at present in our secondary schools as well as the current types of public examination should be replaced by a wider system of examination. The Commission desired that the system of "Cumulative Record Card" should be immediately introduced in our schools, because that system would not only give a clearer picture of the pupils' achievement in school, but it would also give a better idea of their '*total personality*' as developed through school experiences ; it would thus embody

a progressive evaluation of the education system as a whole.

The Central Advisory Board of Education sponsored most of the recommendations of the Commission and accordingly, the Central Government set up the All India Council for Secondary Education for the implementation of the suggested reforms. The council in its turn thoroughly studied the issues involved and advised introduction of a few reformatory measures.

From the standpoint of examination-reform the following two measures have been suggested :-

- the maintenance of cumulative record cards in schools.
- the introduction of objective tests.

We are concerned here with the first one, i. e. the maintenance of cumulative record cards in schools.

## 2. Implications of Cumulative Record Card :

Before we start discussing the actual maintenance of cumulative record cards in schools, let us be clear about this card itself. What is this cumulative record card ? What are its implications ? Are we to understand that the introduction of cumulative record card does not mean anything more than the use of an eight-page record card in place of the prevailing one page or two page progress reports ? In other words, does the introduction of this record card system demand

only an elaboration of the assessment procedures in our schools ? Or, does it imply something more than a *quantitative change* ? To many, it would appear that it should mean something more ; it should imply a qualitative change of far-reaching importance, and not merely a few additions to the existing system of progress reports. The proper interpretation of the new practice should embody an over-all change in the *nature* of school-assessment. In a sense, it should signal the advent of the concept of '*evaluation*' in the field of secondary education ; and that is the underlying significance of the Commission's recommendation in this regard. If the introduction of cumulative record card is not viewed as a tool to be used with advantage in the new system of secondary education, vitalised with the incorporation of desired reforms, we would always fail to appreciate the value of this card and consequently we would be apprehending troubles from it. If this card is considered to be a *symbol* of evaluation-reform, we can never expect to maintain it properly unless and until we modify our existing school practices to suit the implied objectives. If we are to satisfactorily use the card, we must first learn to think in terms of the modified values of education, to practise as per the requirements of the changed concepts, ideas and ideals. Man's education does never admit of any '*piece-meal*' change or reform. Any change of value

brings with it a new orientation, a new perspective, culminating in a significant alteration of the whole set-up. This perhaps explains, to some extent at least, the bewilderment of many of our teachers who could not readily follow how, in existing set-up of things, the cumulative record card could be satisfactorily maintained. The stumbling block of our inadequacies and insufficiencies in the prevailing system should not however be regarded as insurmountable. In fact the introduction of the cumulative record card may be taken as a challenge against all these inadequacies and insufficiencies. Let the cumulative record card help us turn our eyes to these difficulties and let us be inspired to accept the challenge and do our mite to reach the goal inspite of all opposition. Let us see how much of these inadequacies and insufficiencies is due to external factors lying beyond our control and how much is due to us, i.e., to our failings or misgivings, our indifference or self-complacency.

Let not this temporary 'flutter' end in a disorderly flight forcing us thereby to live an ignoble life ; let us not be benumbed by the sudden impact of this great force. Contrarily, let us rise to the occasion ; let us seize this valuable opportunity to stage back an organised fight against all that is undesirable and unholy in the education system. Let us feel in the heart of our hearts that it is a boon rather than a curse. Let this be our guiding

motto—"Arise ! Awake ! Stop not till the goal is reached" "উত্তিষ্ঠ ! জাগত ! আপ্য বরান্ নিরোধত"

On the other hand, the administrators of secondary education have also to do something by way of helping the half-dazed teachers to cross the difficult hurdles on the way. They must, to be precise, be fighting alongside, and in full co-operation with, the struggling teachers against the heavy odds of inadequacies and insufficiencies. *Arrangements for proper in-service training should immediately be made, through workshops and seminars, to equip the teachers with relevant knowledge and information about the methods or techniques appropriate for the purpose.* The school-personnel should never be allowed to get themselves much involved in financial troubles in their attempt to effect some improvement in the general condition of the school-life which, for all practical purposes, would be considered as absolutely essential. Immediate steps should also be taken to include systematic training in the maintenance of cumulative records in the B.T. or B.Ed. courses. And finally, provision should at once be made for proper recognition of these cumulative record cards in the subsequent life and career of the pupils concerned. Truly speaking, this last one is the most important thing that we should do to boost up the *morale* of our fighting teachers, to give them back their prestige and authority, to help them regain their lost status.

The best way to do it is to replace the existing system of Public Examinations by the *School Leaving Certificate*, in the real sense, based on the findings of the cumulative record card. This will go a long way to revive the teachers' faith in their power of judgment and value-discrimination. It will also make the teachers highly conscious of their sacred duties so that they would *think twice* before they propose to put anything on record. We should be, and we have got to be, progressive enough to think in terms of such revolutionary changes.

The Secondary Education Commission also recommended the award of such certificates in stages below the School Final. They even suggested that the final public examination need not be compulsory for all ; but pupils completing the secondary course should get school leaving certificates, based on school records, testifying their progress and attainments in different directions. (1)

In regard to the question of reliability of these certificates the Commission rightly pointed out that the only way to make the teachers' judgments reliable was to rely on them. The Norwood Committee (England) in their report on '*Curriculum and Examination in Secondary Schools*' also suggested that a school certificate, based on the teachers' judgments and on the findings of the cumulative

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(1) Vide Commission's Report—p. 151.

record, should furnish all possible information of real value about the child and that the practice would at the same time enhance the possibility of preserving the academic freedom of the secondary school teachers and their organisations.

There is, however, the annoying question of *variability in standard* in respect of the certificates issued by different schools and, in order to put a useful check on this point, we may think of an external public examination. The Secondary Education Commission while recommending such an examination under the responsibility of a properly constituted authority suggested that the form of the certificates (to be awarded) should be so changed that they would mention, along with the marks secured by pupils in different subjects in the public examination, the results of the school tests and other important findings from the cumulative record card. The Commission desired that the authorities concerned should prescribe a form where the schools would fill in some of the sections from the cumulative record card while the results of the public examination in detail would be entered by the examining authority. In other words, the form of the certificates should be so devised, and these certificates should be so treated, that both the authorities, the public body conducting the external examination and the school organisation doing the internal assessment, are given equal importance. It should, however, be

frankly admitted that these suggestions, when accepted and followed, would bring in a series of complicated changes in the field of secondary-school-administration.

Let us, therefore, suggest an alternative procedure. We may decide that we should henceforward consider the *school leaving certificate* as the only basic document about a pupil and the certificate issued on the results of any public examination as an appendage to it. We may, at the same time, change the nature of our public examination certificates. Instead of having categorisations of the type, 'pass' (1st division, 2nd division or 3rd division) and 'fail', these certificates may bear testimony about 'pass' only, either at the advanced or ordinary level. The existing concept of 'pass' may also be disintegrated, i. e., there may not be a collective or over-all 'pass', but a number of 'passes' in respect of *different* subjects severally (e.g., 'pass' in Bengali at the ordinary level, 'pass' in Mathematics at the advanced level, 'pass' in English at the ordinary level and so on).

Circumstances demand that we should be bold enough to introduce these changes as early as possible. Otherwise the cumulative record card will in no way prove to be a better substitute for the existing progress reports.

### 3. *Contents of the card and their structure :*

As suggested before, the cumulative record card should, in the main, be considered as an 'evaluation-tool' to be utilised with advantage in the reorganised structure of secondary education. It is but natural, therefore, that this 'evaluation tool' should be constructed and developed in accordance with the fundamental objectives of our '*education system*'. Normally, the content and structure of the cumulative record card would be different for different countries or peoples, professing different ideals of life and, as such, fostering different concepts of living in and through the society. So we would better clarify the relation between the aims and objectives of our secondary education on the one hand and the content-structure of the cumulative record card on the other. In an education system which is solely governed and rigidly controlled by a prescribed curriculum, distributed over a period of time into a number of 'blocks' to be covered in successive academic years, the teachers or educators would mainly think of the *principle of selection or rejection* as the guiding criterion for determining the content-structure of the record card. In fact, most of the progress reports obtaining in the schools of our country, until quite recently, would demonstrably prove the truth of this point and it would be superfluous to illustrate it further.

If, however, we start thinking in terms of an

education system adapted to the concept of 'personality development', the record card would at once demand a content-structure which must be both diagnostically and prognostically oriented. The different items of the record card shall have to be so chosen and placed that the card would best serve the purpose of a tool to be used maximally for the betterment of the educands from all possible standpoints. That is, the card so constructed is expected to be of maximum help to the educators for understanding thoroughly the children under their charge, their needs and their subsequent roles in the social or national set-up as well as for fostering the educands' personality to its fullest extent. In other words, if we really pledge ourselves to this goal of *personality development*, the record card should be so designed as to give a systematic account of all the valuable information about children which would help the educators to understand them fully, to educate them properly, to advise them adequately and to plan suitably the courses and careers that would suit them best in their subsequent roles in society. All these concepts of understanding, educating, advising and planning, should, however, be interpreted relatively in the context of the prevailing social goals, i.e., the aims of life and living, accepted and practised by the society. It is needless to suggest that our record card should contain information about an individual not

merely as an individual but as one belonging to a society. It should contain all significant items necessary for a comprehensive, though analytic, study of the individual as placed (or likely to be placed) in the social set-up. with its distinctive features of educational administrations and organisations, training facilities, the occupational structure (or the trend of such structure) and the employment potentialities and opportunities.

It has been rightly stated that "it is the system and comprehensiveness which the pupils' record card is intended to assist."(2)

If that 'system and comprehensiveness' is ensured, the record card will give a clear picture of the child at progressive stages of development. It will also provide the most valuable elements of information which are considered to be indispensable for a quick but sure review of the child's position when important decisions are to be made and followed about his or her future course of life—educational, vocational or otherwise. The Secondary Education Commission (1952-53) presented(3) a specimen form of the cumulative record card which covered practically all the areas of the child's life that we would like to see included there, at least, on principle. The headings which

(2) Hamley H. R. et al.—The Educational Guidance of the School Child. Evans Brothers Ltd., London. p. 17.

(3) The Report of the Secondary Education Commission, Govt. of India, (1952-53)—pp. 289-300.

are most frequently found in such cards are the following :—

- (a) Personal data of general nature
- (b) Physical characteristics and qualities
- (c) Educational attainment (school examination results)
- (d) Results of psychological tests (general and special abilities)
- (e) Co-curricular activities
- (f) Interest-trends.
- (g) Dispositional characteristics and personality traits
- (h) Family back-ground and home circumstances
- (i) Special merits and/or disabilities
- (j) Teachers' suggestions or recommendations  
(in regard to future course of action)

It must be mentioned, however, that though the record cards obtaining in most of the progressive countries show fairly satisfactory agreement in respect of the general outline of content, the different headings are quite often given varying degrees of importance and these are also arranged or presented in a variety of ways. These variations may be explained in terms of the differing ideals of education professed by different countries or societies. It is true that the design of the record card should depend primarily on the nature of the broad objectives which the cards intend to cover as well as on the nature of the uses which the card

would subsequently be put to. Miss Walker who carried out a comprehensive survey of pupils' record cards in England and Wales, has reviewed in her report(4) the essential purposes of such record cards, classifying along with the principles which control and determine the construction and use of different types of record cards in schools. The form or design of the cards will also be strongly influenced by the general attitude of the school-system towards the aims of education ; for example, in the *progressive* system particular attention is paid to the recording of child's progress in personal and social traits, whereas in the *traditional* system of formal curriculum, the examination-results in different school-subjects are given much prominence and in the *Comprehensive school* system the record cards include detailed headings wherein notes are made of the emergence in the child's life of the special aptitudes or abilities, the interest-trends and motivational directions through the progressive development of 'self-concept'.

Of course, much of the nature of these classified information depends on the following points as well.

- (i) The instruments of evaluation that are readily available for use.

(4) Walker Alice S.—Pupils' Record Card — published for N.F.E.R. (England and Wales) by Newnes Educational Publishing Co. Ltd., 1955.

(ii) The amount of work that would devolve on the school-personnel on this account.

If we decide to treat this cumulative record as the only basic document about a child when he or she would leave the school, all these headings (vide page 12) must be duly considered. If, however, we decide that only certain percentage of marks will be assigned to the recordings on these cards, it will invariably result in most of the emphasis being placed on the particular item of '*educational attainment*' to the sorrowful neglect of others.

We should also remember that the record card has to be devised with the implicit objective of building up a very valuable tool for organising the guidance programme in our school. As we all know, the pupils at the end of their junior high school stage (i.e. after class VIII) are to be advised in the matter of, first, going on to higher secondary education and secondly, selecting a suitable course of study from among the elective groups,—humanities, science, technical, commerce, agriculture, fine arts and home science. Naturally, the items which seem to be significantly related to guidance work, namely, past educational attainment, abilities and aptitudes, nature of predominant interests, co-curricular activities, a few important personality traits and teachers' suggestions in regard to future educational courses, etc., have to be placed prominently.

#### 4. *Cumulative Record Cards and our Teachers :*

But whatever may be the content structure of the card, it is perhaps more important to see that our teachers adopt a positive attitude towards the maintenance of these cumulative record cards.

We are to take due note of the fact that our teachers, as they are, would react differently to its introduction. Some may see in this card an indirect form of control on their work ; some may think that the guardians would resent the idea of such records about their wards being made known to other people ; some may show little enthusiasm to undertake the onerous task which would demand so much of their time and energy ; some may feel that the introduction of such cards would bring about a serious disorganisation in the existing work-programme of our institutions ; some may even be tempted to do the recordings with the least amount of care. It is highly desirable that we anticipate these difficulties which are mostly of the type of natural reactions to innovations. It should be our duty to resolve these conflicts satisfactorily with a view to ensuring maximum co-operation on the part of our teaching personnel as otherwise all our endeavour in this respect would end in a futile agitation, creating so much of 'sound and fury' but producing nothing of significant value. We should also remember that our teachers, at the present stage, may not be in a position to take initiative in this direction. If we are to effectively help them

in this regard we must give them the necessary encouragement, and, at the same time, we must extend to them all facilities for gaining a workable knowledge of the broad techniques and methods of evaluating the child's personality as well as of the ways of recording the results of such evaluation properly in the different sections of the cumulative record card.

Some may also argue that a few sections of the record card are of such a nature that it will be very difficult to make the subjective ratings on them acceptable to all. They would, therefore, advocate the use of strictly objective methods for the purpose. Our answer to such criticisms would be as follows :

First, as hinted before, we have not at our disposal the appropriate 'tools' of objective type which we may readily employ for assessing the children, say, with respect to interests, personality traits, etc.

Secondly, if confidence is placed only on the objective tools, the range of our project of understanding the children will have to be undesirably reduced.

Thirdly, the scheme of maintaining cumulative records in our schools being entirely new, we would do well to keep before us Hamley's warning to the effect that 'any sudden change in the direction of more scientific methods is likely to bring about a wrong attitude on the part of the teacher'

and to dehumanise his contact with the child.'(2)

Modern techniques of education rely as much on impersonal scientific tools as on intuitive judgment of the teacher.

We should, however, bear in mind that when we propose to rely on the subjective ratings of our teachers it becomes imperative on our part to explain to our teachers the theories and intentions that underlie these methods of evaluation. Nothing should be kept concealed from them.

#### *5. Cumulative Record Cards and Parents :*

The parents, and the children too, should be taken into confidence and they should be helped to understand these recordings as far as practicable, so that they would appreciate the value of such records even with their limitations. Indeed, it will always be our endeavour to make this record-keeping project a co-operative affair in the real sense, where teachers, parents, children and school administrators would freely, sincerely and diligently participate and work together. Incidentally we are reminded of an irritating issue,—the confidential nature of such school records. This has been the subject of much heated discussion. It has been rightly pointed out in a report on "Evaluation in Education", developed at an International Meeting of Experts<sup>5</sup>, that the educational

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(5) Evaluation in Education edited by F. Hotyat and published by Unesco Institute for Education, Hamburg, pp. 25-26

authorities who are mainly concerned with the role of such records in selection for higher education may believe that secrecy is a sort of protection for the teaching staff against the parents who, frustrated by their child's lack of progress, would like to lay the entire blame of such failure on the teachers. One may not, however, see any reason why the parents, the most important co-sharers in this new project, should be deprived of occasional access to these records. Miss A. Walker of the United Kingdom may be fruitfully quoted here. "If the information is used for the welfare of the pupil with a view to helping those who are responsible for his education it follows that only those who can use the records wisely and fully and without prejudice must have access to them. Briefly, the principle of the sanctity of professional information must be applied to school records just as is done with medical records."

It should also be pointed out that transfer of such records, or at least of a summarised report of their essentials, to the appropriate persons or authorities must be the rule whenever there would be an institutional change in the life of the child.

#### *6. Maintenance of the Cumulative Record Card and Methods of Study :*

In order to maintain the cumulative record card fairly satisfactorily, we have to take recourse to a number of techniques of general but direct nature,

besides the usual ones of examinations (formal and informal) and tests (ad hoc and standardised, diagnostic and prognostic). The latter would give us an accurate idea of the child's achievements and abilities while the former would help us to understand the child's personality as it acts and feels, impresses and inspires. If we can wisely combine these two 'pictures' of the child in our attempt at interpreting its personality as a whole, our inferences are likely to be of greater value than when we would stand on any one of them singly.

Let us present here some of the *direct methods* (as against examinations or tests) of studying our children.

#### A. *Observation* :

Observation is the simplest but the most direct method of assessing 'personality'. If, however, we like to utilise this method to our best advantage under the existing circumstances, we must have our observation-scheme so planned that it would provide a clear and complete picture of the child's personality, at least in respect of our specific requirements. It is also desirable from the standpoint of uniformity in assessment that the school-administrators should sit round a table and have the different personality traits or interests defined reasonably objectively and preferably in terms of their manifestations in behaviour. Moreover, the categorisations in respect of any item

under any heading, either on a three-point, five-point or seven-point scale as the case may be, must also be precisely described so that the observers may easily refer to them at the time of assessing an individual pupil. If that is not possible in case of a particular item, it would be wise for us not to categorise it at all, so that observers are left free to put therein their own qualified descriptions as per the accepted definition or meaning of the item concerned.

We are also to remember that teachers can not do these observations systematically unless they get sufficient opportunities to know the children closely and intimately. The method of observation can be used effectively only when there is adequate arrangement for suitable kinds and varieties of activities and experiences in which our school children can actually participate as *active members in a democratic group*. If, on the other hand, the work-programmes in our schools are allowed to continue as usual, wherein our children have mostly a *passive role* to play, there will be very little scope for observation as such.

For economic and other related reasons (which are generally stressed by the heads of our institutions in this regard) it will be really difficult for any school to introduce the required number of activities and experiences in the form of cocurricular activities. But attempts must invariably be made to change the nature of our class-lessions so

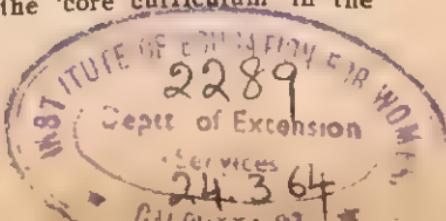
that some activities on the part of our learners are systematically introduced during class-teaching, through discussions, projects or other methods of group-study or group-work. Some workable arrangements can be easily made in respect of the core-subjects of the curriculum, provided we get rid of the unnatural examination-phobia and keep before us the motto—'We are here to help the children attain a healthy allround development and not merely cross the examination-hurdle'.\* A wise planning on the part of our headmasters or head-mistresses and the subject-teachers is what is essentially needed. Once we break the ice in this regard, everything desirable will follow in due course.

#### *Observational Ratings :*

The three-point scale is, in the opinion of many, the crudest method of doing these ratings. Many would favour a five-point scale and some even seven. But the majority of our teachers being practically unaccustomed to such ratings and their techniques, the three-point scale may appear to be the most suitable at the initial stage. Of course, 'good-average-poor' or 'marked-average-poor' categories must be precisely defined to make the ratings tolerably satisfactory. It may be pointed out that normally, in case of the majority of schools,

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\* The author would discuss the 'core curriculum' in the second volume of the series.



we may expect to have roughly 60-70 percent of the total group (being rated) placed in the 'average' category, and 15-20 percent placed in each of the other two categories, namely, 'good' or 'marked' and 'poor'.

It should also be stated that in case of doubt, hesitation or indefiniteness in respect of any individual, the check-mark may be placed, if so desired, at any one of the two intermediate places (to be inserted beforehand) in-between any two consecutive categories of, say, 'good or marked' and 'average' or 'average' and 'poor'. If, however, we insist on using the five-point scale (and the above procedure would naturally lead us to it) we may bear in mind the following rough estimates in regard to the distribution of a normal population in five-grade categories.

(a)	marked or good	...	roughly	5%
{ (a-)	In-between good or marked	{	.. ..	25%
(b +)		and average	{	.. ..
(b)	"Average"		40%	
{ (b-)	In-between average		.. ..	25%
(c +)		and poor	{	.. ..
(c)	Poor		5%	

It is suggested, however, that so long we do not make adequate arrangements in our schools for the provision of experiences and activities through which different aspects of the child's personality are likely to be clearly manifested, teachers in charge of the maintenance of records may be

allowed to leave out any item in respect of any individual or even in respect of the whole class as unchecked i. e. 'not-rated', because they may feel that there have been insufficient data or evidences in that regard.

One possible weakness of such observational ratings lies deep in the changeable nature of teacher-pupil relationship. If that relationship is not developed systematically on sound democratic principles and nurtured subsequently through the spirit of sympathy, co-operation and service on the part of the school administrators, parents and the related educational authorities, nothing reliable may come out of these observational ratings. The teacher-pupil relationship rests on a number of violent explosives, like prejudice, bias, sentiments and attitudes of either party and the emotionally loaded situations of human life. The value of these ratings is likely to be immensely increased if there is provision for independent confirmation on them, simultaneous or subsequent, by a number of judges who are more or less equally placed to observe and rate the child. That is why it is often demanded that these observational ratings should be corroborated by at least three teacher-judges (if not more) before they are finally recorded in the card. That is why we should also advocate the practice of recording, in a separate file for each individual pupil, at least two independent ratings from the same teacher-judge,

one at the end of, say, each semester (i.e., half-yearly). The pooling of all these judgments at the end of the year (at least two independent ratings from each of three teacher-judges) by a specially set-up Board or Committee of four or five members (the class-teacher, two or three teachers with highest possible acquaintance with the class concerned and the headmaster/headmistress or his/her deputy) would definitely improve the reliability and validity of these recordings. At no time, however, it should be imagined that these recordings are most formal, i. e. most ordinary type of routine work.

Lastly, the interpretation of these observational ratings or assessments must always be very cautiously made. A child's personality should not be judged simply on the basis of these recordings alone. The child's school-life is mostly lived in an artificial atmosphere, vibrated by the school-tone, saturated by the school-discipline and coloured by the school-practices. The over-strong discipline or, say, absolute lack of it, the rigid (or otherwise) school practices and the showy school-modes may influence the child's personality within the school-compound to such an extent that the overt manifestation may not truly suggest the real picture of one's inner self. Moreover, there is the child's family—its members and organisation, its activities and interests, its ideals and beliefs, wherefrom the

child would certainly be carrying 'things' that may make its personality look thus and thus. How are we to sieve out even a moderately clear outline of the child's real personality from its so many variegated appearances that differ from one another because of the child's playing different roles in diverse situations? On the other hand, the recordings we make may have important bearing on the child's future career. In a seminar organised by a Teacher-Association on the subject '*Reform of the Examination System*',—a few teachers were very much apprehensive of the ultimate use of these ratings. They thought that these recordings might haunt the individual child all through its future life like a "ghost". None of the proponents of the record-card system would ever dream of such a tragic end. These apprehensions are obviously due to some wild misconceptions lurking in the minds of a section of our teaching community. One who is interested in educational reconstruction would fervently wish that the opposite of what has been apprehended here might come to be true; i.e., the recordings on the cards would follow the individual-child in its future life like a benevolent angel, a guiding spirit.

Any way, the fore-going discussion would suggest that we must take recourse to other methods of study to supplement and through the supplementation to purify if required, or to enrich if possible, the findings based on the observation method.

## B. Questionnaires :

The method of questionnaire is another handy method which we can conveniently employ for quick collection of data about school children. Each child, as we know, plays a number of roles in life. The child's role in the school-community can be broadly estimated through observations made by teachers. But what about its role in the family, in the local community or in the students' clubs ? What about its role in the school itself, a role that is felt not by the teachers but by its peers or class-mates ? It is needless to add that through these variegated roles the child will be impressing the persons, groups or institutions concerned in different ways. If we want to gain an insight into the child's multi-faceted personality, we are to devise certain techniques whereby it will be possible for us to tap the proper sources for collecting valuable information about the child's active self. The method of questionnaire is a useful device in this regard. Questionnaires may be sent to the related person or persons in the family, in the local community, in hobby-clubs, activity-clubs or other groups. Of course, the charge of utilising such questionnaires for the study of child's personality should be entrusted only to school-psychologists or specialist-teachers of the school guidance services. The reason is rather obvious. The questionnaire technique may appear on the surface to be quite

simple and easy, but the interpretation of its findings is highly technical and, therefore, sensitive. One may not object to these questionnaires being used by the school teachers for the purpose of getting a detailed picture of the child's active personality ; but, then, their interpretation must always be regarded as provisional unless the trend of such interpretations is corroborated by expert reading or confirmed from other sources. In order to make the information derived out of these questionnaires a little more reliable and usable, we may suggest the following principles.—

- (a) The questionnaire should, as far as practicable, be related to real experiences, concrete situations or overt behaviour.
- (b) Each question should make a single query.
- (c) The different aspects of the child's life and consequently the distinctive roles the child plays should be adequately covered.
- (d) Questionnaires on different roles against diverse contexts should be ingenuously mixed up and widely multiplied in order to ensure the judicious use of 'cross-checking' as a kind of control.

The value of the questionnaire method, however, does not depend entirely on the quality of questionnaires themselves ; it depends to a great extent on how the questionnaires are actually responded to by the parties concerned. It is, therefore, strongly felt that something should be done to make the

parties take the questionnaires in the proper spirit of earnestness and sincerity.

### C. Biographical Reports :

Different sections of the 'Record Card' are intended to depict different aspects of the child's personality, and quite often these different aspects give only fragmentary view of the child. These scattered pictures should be seen in the proper developmental perspective if they are to be correctly understood and rightly appreciated. Many of the child's activities or behaviours can not be accurately interpreted unless they are interwoven into a trend or pattern with the help of events and experiences in the past life of the child. Therein lies the need and importance of biographical reports which would conveniently provide the necessary background for a happy and satisfactory synthesis. It is often felt that the child's life out of school, specially its life in the family, is a truer index of its personality than its life within the school.

The biographical reports can be procured in the following way :—

- (i) The auto-biography of the child may be obtained through diaries and periodical reports.
- (ii) The life-history of the child may be obtained from parents and guardians.
- (iii) The extra-academic achievements of the

child as seen by its peers or by persons interested in the child may be noted.

The value of these biographical reports will be greatly enhanced if (a) the records obtained from each of the parties follow a systematic plan useful for the purpose; and (b) the biographical history is, as a rule, cross-checked through records obtained from different sources, e.g., the child itself, the parents or guardians, the peers, etc. For example, the autobiographical reports may be procured on a day randomly selected during the term and it should be so procured regularly from term to term, from year to year. These reports are expected to speak a volume about the child's personality, and to be more revealing than what we may get through the so-called psychological tests. Many would, however, feel that the charge of compiling and screening through these biographical reports should not be placed on the poor teachers who are already overburdened with so many duties and responsibilities connected with the day-to-day function of the school. It will be advisable to have on the staff a specialist teacher for the purpose.

#### D. Work-Samples :

A few work-samples like paintings, drawings, handicrafts, written reports and compositions, etc. (whether spontaneous or prescribed) may be periodically procured to gain a very useful insight

into some significant traits of the child's personality. These work-samples would indicate the child's special abilities and interests and offer valuable evidence of its originality, quality of thought, style, emotional control, ambition or drive and social maturity. In fact, comparison of work-samples on the same topic or subject in respect of the same individual on a half-yearly or yearly basis for two or three years may bring forth quite an interesting account of the child's developing personality.

#### *7. Form of the Cumulative Record Card and Suggestions for its Maintenance:*

Let us now try to draw up an acceptable form of the card and offer systematically our suggestions for its maintenance, section by section. It may once again be repeated that the card is intended to give as full and clear a picture of the child's personality as possible. We have proposed to accept a dynamic concept of human personality which develops continuously and cumulatively through advancing years as a result of multifarious functions and experiences, interactions and inter-relationships of various traits, factors and influences, operating on, within and around the individual. We should admit that the personality-dimensions and their structure of individuals are also changing their nature and taking somewhat different shapes and patterns from, say, one stage of development to the other.

From our knowledge of the usual trend of human development at any particular stage of growth in the life of the individual or at a particular stage of cultural growth in the life of the society to which the individual belongs, from our idea of the needs and requirements of the next and subsequent higher stages of the individual's career in the society and from our knowledge of the facilities and opportunities readily available in the institutions as well as of the status of the persons who would be given the charge of maintaining these cards, we should plan the *content-structure* of our card i.e. its *form*. It should be distinctly understood that the form of a record card, found quite suitable for junior grades, may not ordinarily be taken over into the senior grades. The card-structure described here is primarily meant for the junior high or senior basic stage, i.e., for the last three years of our 'Elementary Education' corresponding mostly to the age-range of 11 to 14 years of our school children.

#### A. Personal Data :

The data to be collected and recorded under this head are strictly descriptive in nature and intended for the identification of the child. Entries in this regard can be easily made if we just follow the practice of opening the card and starting an individual file for each pupil, simultaneously with the recording of necessary particulars in the school admission register. Name of the pupil, name

of the father and of the guardian, address (present and permanent), date of birth, etc. will help us to identify the child at any time during its future life and career. This is specially required for carrying on successfully any follow-up study, if we intend to take up any. A recent photograph of the child will be of great help, not only for identifying the child more easily but also in the matter of recollecting fairly clearly at any subsequent date the important events of its past life.

#### *B. Physical characteristics and qualities :*

Height, weight, chest, teeth, vision, hearing, strength of the physique, capacity for hard work, special physical disabilities (if any),—these are the usual items included in this section. Information on most of these items will be coming in from the school medical officer's report, a copy of which must always be placed in the individual file for the child. If, in any school, there is no such provision for medical examination, immediate arrangement for the same should be made. In regard to the items—strength of the physique and capacity for hard work, the Board of four or five teachers to be set up, as suggested before, for the purpose of screening all the materials on the eve of their final entry into the card may have a pooling of opinions and rate the children on a five point scale, e.g., excellent, good, fair, not satisfactory and poor. When, however, organised psychological services

will be introduced in our schools, psycho-physical test of the type of 'dynamometre' and 'ergograph' may be profitably used. The recordings under this section will be fruitfully utilised when they will be used for making the parents or guardians conscious of the health-problems of their wards.

### *C. Educational Achievements :*

This section may be divided into three sub-sections, namely,

(i) the results of school examinations.

(ii) the teachers' estimates.

(iii) the results of standardised attainment tests.

For the present, we may have only the first two ; the third sub-section will have to wait till we develop proper tests for wider application. If, however, any individual school is in a position to procure such tests, the results thereof may be suitably recorded in proper form in a separate column set apart for the purpose. Let us, therefore, discuss only the first two sub-sections here .—

#### *(i) School Examination Results*

The first thing to be noted in this connection is that the entire examination programme of the school for the whole session should be thoroughly planned beforehand. Secondly, the sum total of the marks obtained by any individual pupil in all the important examinations of the session in respect of each of the subjects or subject-parts should be duly

recorded. This procedure will not only make the pupils regular in their progress of studies but it will also make them equally serious about all assessments done during the year. It may also help the teachers utilise the terminal or monthly examination results for diagnostic purpose.

The school results should be kept in the following manner to facilitate their subsequent entry in the record card.

Marks obtained in different subjects

Name of Pupils	Name of the Examination	Beng	English	Maths.	Hist.	Geog.	Science
Periodical							
Half-yearly							
Annual							
Total							

Thirdly, the raw-score results in each subject when they are entered in the record card should be supplemented by a derived score. As we know, the raw scores in an examination do not by themselves mean much unless they are placed against a suitable standard for interpretation. The percentage scale that we are accustomed to follow in most of our examinations, though

useful in a limited sense in respect of assessments of individual subjects considered only severally, is likely to be misleading and even meaningless when a comparative assessment of an individual child is what is desired, i.e. when the achievement of one individual is compared against those of others or an individual's achievement in one subject is compared with his/her achievements in some other subjects. It is, therefore, suggested that the easiest form of derived score, the rank-score in the class, should be given alongside the total mark (or the average) of each individual in each subject. The rank score in any subject for an individual should be determined on the basis of the total marks (or the average) obtained by the individual in that subject in respect of all the important examinations of the year, compared quantitatively against those of the other children in that particular subject for the particular year and the class.

The rank-score in each subject should, however, be accompanied by the number of pupils in the class, actually taking the examinations; as otherwise the rank score alone, without the total number of pupils in the corresponding group, would not be so meaningful. Take, for example, the case of a child who occupies the 19th position in a class of 20 children only, as against a child who stands 19th in a class of 60 or 80. Moreover, the rank-score, when accompanied by the number of the group, will help one to calculate directly the percentile

rank (the estimated rank of an individual in a standard group of 100) that may sometimes be effectively used for doing the comparative study.

(ii) *Teachers' Estimates*

Over and above the examination marks, class-teachers may be asked to make, in close co-operation with other teachers engaged in the class, their own estimates of the performance of each pupil in respect of class-work in specific subjects (or subject-parts), as outlined below :

- (a) Subjects in respect of which the pupil's work is much above the average.....
- (b) Subjects in respect of which the pupil's work is much below the average.....
- (c) Subjects or subject-areas in which the pupil's work demands special attention (both bright and dark side of the issue may be considered).....
- (d) Standard of the pupil's performance in mother-tongue —excellent, good, fair, not satisfactory or poor.....
- (e) Standard of the pupil's performance in mathematics —excellent, good, fair, not satisfactory or poor.....

#### *D. Results of Psychological Tests :*

This is one of the important sections of the record card. But this section should be left out for the present. So long we do not develop standard psychological tests for the measurement of human abilities, it will not be wise on our part to include this section in our card.

#### *E. Cocurricular Activities :*

In regard to the type of activities to be included in the section the following may be mentioned.

Debates, Magazine, Sports and games, Socials and other recreational activities, Excursions, Gardening, Observance of important days like Independence Day, Republic Day, Parents' Day, Foundation Day, Birth days of illustrious 'sons of the soil', Cooperative store, Music and dancing, Drawing, Painting, Craftwork, Sewing and embroidery, First Aid, Community Health Service, Social Service, N.C.C. or A.C.C., Scouts or Guides, Exhibitions, Dramas and recitations, Essay competition, Wall-Newspaper, etc., etc.

It is not expected that all these activities will be immediately provided in our Schools. But it will perhaps be our goal to introduce as many of these activities as possible. It should also be emphasized that organisation of these activities must form a regular feature of the school's time-table. The form of arrangement of the items

for evaluation purposes may be made as follows :—

**NATURE OF PARTICIPATION**

Type of Acti- vity	Frequency			Seriousness		
	Very regular	Fairly regular	Only occasionally	Very serious	Not so serious	In- different
1.						
2.						
3.						
4.						

and so on

The rating may be done twice a year at a joint meeting of at least the class-teacher and the teacher-in-charge of the corresponding item (e.g. the music teacher at the time of rating on music, the physical instructor at the time of rating on games, etc., etc.). In order to ensure reliability of these ratings, a regular register should be maintained by the teacher-in-charge of each of the items. The 'ratings' on these activities may be made broad-based (and so, all the more satisfactory and valuable) if the teacher-judges or raters can utilise fruitfully any additional information on the point through the use of the following 'tools' :—

- (a) Pupil's personal diaries or autobiographical reports (to be collected each month).
- (b) Questionnaire for the parents (to be sent out twice a year and reports collected).

These two, the autobiographical report of the pupils and the report of the parents or guardians, will not only be found very useful for the purpose of rating the individuals in respect of cocurricular activities, but these are likely to prove almost equally useful for assessing the individual's interests and sometimes even a few personality traits.

No rating should, however, be done with respect to those items which are not adequately provided in the school programme.

#### *F. Interest-trends :*

'Interest' is undoubtedly an important aspect of one's personality, as it helps us much to know and understand the trend of one's developmental needs as well as one's attitude towards different types or kinds of activities. It is often believed that this interest factor would correlate fairly highly with 'attainment' in the respective fields. Of course, it should not be inferred from what is stated above that when we know one's interest we should always try to sustain and develop it with care. It may be that we would sometimes try to modify or even to replace it, if required, with a view to helping the individual make himself or herself suitably fit for subsequent role in the society.

It should, at the same time, be admitted that the concept of modification of one's interest-trend is likely to give rise to some undesirable controversy

in a system of democratic education. But if we are realistic enough we should not overlook the fact that in any national system of education, the types of interest that are usually nurtured and rewarded at any particular time or age are mostly conditioned by the prevailing trends of the nation's socio-economic progress, the trends that normally get their formal manifestations in the distinctive features or patterns of the education system (including the training facilities) and the occupation-structure.

We know that our children, after the completion of their general education at the 'elementary' schools, will be advised, at the age of 14 plus, either to go straight on to the multilateral schools with diversified courses or to join any of the different types of vocational institutions or training centres or even to take to available jobs.

Most of these avenues of higher education and further training which are thus made open to children at 14 plus involve activities and experiences that may conveniently be categorised into the following major areas, namely, linguistic or literary, scientific, technical, social service, artistic & musical, commercial, clerical, etc.

We are also aware that satisfactory performance or participation in any one of these areas necessarily implies adequate culture and systematic development of related abilities and interests. We need not discuss, here, the complicated issue

connected with the psychological 'entity' or 'reality' of abilities and interests. That is a big query by itself. But, from the sociological stand-point and the empirical evidences so far collected in this regard, it should be stated that the importance of abilities and interests may not be ignored.

The role of interest has been receiving more attention during recent times than any other single type of human characteristics. We are to see, therefore, that these interests grow in due course and/or they are strenuously developed through systematic arrangement of appropriate activities and experiences in the life of an individual.

It is also to be noted that all of us are not, or rather can not, be equally interested in all the areas. In course of our growth and development, it usually so happens that a particular area of activities and experiences becomes vitally connected with the satisfaction of our fundamental needs of life, specially the predominant needs, and that the individual gets highly interested in that area of activities and experiences and that the individual continues to be so interested as long as there is no radical change in the nature of its predominant needs or of its environmental structure. Perhaps, these predominant needs, and for the matter of that the predominant interests, are to a great extent conditioned by the dominant philosophy of one's own life or of the society and, to some extent at

least, by the environmental resources or facilities readily available at the moment.

All these considerations evidently presuppose that we have got to have a very clear idea of the ways and means which help development as well as differentiation of one's trend of interest. We are to remember that just as abilities need stimulation and encouragement for their nurture and development so do also the interests; and, perhaps, the interests need them more than the abilities.

Again, if differentiation of interests is related to differentiation of abilities (and obviously we should expect a high degree of correlation between types of ability on the one hand and corresponding types of interest on the other), we must have to wait for the 'differentiation stage' to come, in order to distinguish between varied types of interest. We know that differentiation of abilities probably starts at the age of 11 plus and the process of differentiation goes on up to 15, 16 or 18 plus or even higher. It is sometimes claimed that a fairly stable picture of the differentiating abilities (at least the major ones, to be precise) may be obtained at the age of 14 plus or near about. Whether this claim is upheld by psychological or socioiological reasons is a separate issue which we may not bring in here.

From the practical stand point we may say that the differentiation of interest also starts at 11

plus to 13 plus and that this differentiation process, at least in respect of further studies and training, reaches a fairly stable pattern by 16 plus to 18 plus. We are always to remember, however, that this patterning of one's interests is highly flexible in character and that it is more changeable than one's patterning of abilities.

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Any way, from the "why" part of the problem, let us now pass on to the 'what' part of it. What is this 'interest-trend' that we are going to assess ?

First of all, we should try to define these 'interest trends' in terms of some understandable and preferably behavioural concepts.

Secondly, we are to have a detailed plan of activities and experiences (curricular as well as cocurricular) together with the methods of their presentation and execution, that would help us in the initiation, development and sustenance of these interest-trends.

Thirdly, we are to think of the ways and means for a smooth and systematic recording of the varied aspects of these interest-trends so that, we may, at the end, expect to make satisfactory assessments of all these trends.

Interest, we may say, is a state of sustained attention or special curiosity for an activity or experience that concerns an individual much more than other events or activities. The term 'interest' may also be explained as follows :

If an individual becomes interested in any event or activity it may be presumed

- (i) that he experiences some pleasurable emotion in it, at least one of his major needs is satisfied by it and consequently he feels a bit more 'well-adjusted' in the process ;
- (ii) that he enjoys the situation which brings him and the event or activity of his interest close together, appreciates it well and thus he experiences some elation of his own self ; and
- (iii) that he will accept certain events or activities and reject others, he will like some and dislike others, i.e. he will respond differentially to events or activities that come his way.

But all these presumptions rest on the one fundamental premise that each and every individual is given sufficient opportunities to experience the different type of activities and events, related to these diverse types of interest.

This may bring in the question of how these different types of interest are related to activities and experiences obtaining in most of the schools at the present moment or that we can provide in our schools if we like to.

We have listed earlier a number of cocurricular activities which are related to one or the other types of interest that are usually included in the record card, namely, linguistic, scientific, mecha-

nical, musical, artistic, commercial-clerical, domestic-human welfare, agricultural, etc. But we have got to admit that inspite of our best efforts in this direction it will not be possible for the majority of our schools to introduce all these cocurricular activities with a view to helping the children develop these varied types of interest.

Naturally, we are forced to turn to the different curricular subjects for the development of the related interests and in order to do so we are to think seriously of some methodological reforms i. e. changed methods of teaching. Planned distribution of the curricular contents over the different grades, systematic organisation of the courses by major units, division of the major units into smaller subunits and the appropriate distribution of time over these units in course of a year or a session, and finally effective utilisation of various types of group-study method (e. g. project method, discussion method, playway method, dramatic method and workshop method) will, it is expected, enable our teachers to have the necessary time and opportunities, not only for helping the children consolidate the knowledge and experience gained by them during ordinary class-teaching but also for initiating in them the growth of interests in different subjects or subject-areas. Over and above these curricular adaptations, we may introduce the following activities and experiences for the 'initiation' purpose.—

- (i) Life-sketch of great men in different spheres.
  - (ii) Talks with filmstrips on different aspects of the 'National Plans' and of different careers and jobs implied by the plan-frame.
  - (iii) Autobiographical reports of men in different major vocations or occupations of the locality.
  - (iv) Visits to local multilateral schools with different streams.
- All these activities and experiences, again, may be organised broadly under the following heads.—
- (a) Type of work and living.
  - (b) National or regional importance.
  - (c) Requirements.
  - (d) Training facilities, amenities, etc.
  - (e) Socio-economic prospects.

It may be pointed out that these activities and experiences are intended for the first phase of interest-development, i.e. the 'initiation' phase. The second phase is related to regular culture and systematic nurture of these varied types of interest, leading ultimately to the differentiation of interest-trends. For the second phase, the following work-programme may be recommended, over and above those listed for the first one.

- (i) Effective and interesting library-services.
- (ii) Useful teacher-pupil relationship.
- (iii) Organisation of excursions to different centres of learning (training or work) for

different types of courses (careers or jobs) or visits to exhibitions, shows or fairs of relevant types.

- (iv) Organising different types of hobby-club in and around the school.

In the third phase we are to look out for evidences of the pupils' stabilising interests through records of active participation in the respective hobby clubs, quality of the work-samples prepared and analysis of the autobiographical reports.

If we can arrange the work-programme of our schools in the way discussed here, it may be possible for our teachers to rate the individual pupils in respect of their predominant interest i.e. to make a sort of differential estimate of the individual's interest-trends. In fact, we should never forget that differential prediction is the ultimate goal of all these assessments. Teachers' observational remarks and official records in respect of pupils' participation in curricular, cocurricular or hobby-club activities, pupils' own appreciation reports in regard to these participations, autobiographical reports of the pupils themselves obtained at regular intervals and the teachers' evaluative reports on the pupils' work-samples on different occasions, will greatly facilitate the 'rating' part of our business.

### G. Dispositional Characteristics and Personality Traits :

The reorganised pattern of our education-system is directed towards the desirable goal of personality development. The educators of New India are to see that pupils under their charge develop in them those essential traits of personality that are usually highly valued by our society for its peaceful existence as well as for its cultural and scientific progress.

Over and above the useful aspects of our personality like health, intellectual and other mental abilities, academic achievements and interests, personality traits like persistence, industriousness, motivation, initiative, emotional stability, sense of responsibility, spirit of co-operation, study habits, work habits, attitude etc., need special mention. All these traits are considered to be highly desirable for efficient citizenship of a democratic society. The research findings quoted by Lindquist (6) Vernon (7) Super (8) Dale (9) Hartson (10) and others

(6) Lindquist E. F.—*Educational Measurement*—American Council of Education, 1950, pp 92-93.

(7) Vernon P. E.—*The Structure of Human Abilities*—Methuen & Co. Ltd , 1950, pp 17-48.

(8) Super Donald E.—*Appraising Vocational Fitness*—Harper & Brothers, 1949, p. 90

(9) Dale R. R.—*From School to University*—Routledge, Kegan Paul & Co., 1954, pp. 154-61.

(10) *Educa. Psychol. Meas.*,—V. No. 3, Autumn, 1945, pp. 273-83.

may well illustrate the point. It follows, therefore, that the cumulative record card, in order to be of real use to the individual and the society, should contain as many of these useful traits as possible.

As suggested earlier, we would also be using the information recorded in these cards for advising children in the selection of their courses or careers at crucial stages of their life; so at least those personality traits which are considered to be significantly associated with successful completion of higher training (educational or vocational) should find their due places in these cards.

Anyway, whatever be the traits included, it should always be borne in mind that the traits are first to be developed in the children before we make any attempt for their assessment. As in the case of *interest-trends*, we are again to initiate these traits in the children through appropriate activities or experiences, nurture them on through the development of required *habit-systems* and finally help their satisfactory integration into the 'selves' that would ultimately constitute their personality (11).

It is clear that we are to effect certain vital changes in the curricular, co-curricular or extra-curricular work-programme as well as in the organisational set-up of our schools if we really

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(11) Allport G. W.—Personality, a psychological interpretation—Henry Holt & Co., New York, 1951, pp. 139-41.

intend to have these traits developed in our children. We may propose that the concept of core curriculum should be given an experimental trial in this regard. It is often claimed that the core-programme is much better than the conventional one, specially in regard to the development of improved social attitudes, better civic behaviour, greater interest in community affairs, effective work-habits, higher degrees of self-confidence, co-operativeness and emotional control, more acceptable social adjustment and hence most of the desirable traits of personality listed earlier. The core-curriculum with its avowed purpose of serving the personal and social needs of children offers optimum opportunity to transform the widely diffused extra-curricular activities obtaining in our schools at present into a planned programme of curricular activities with extensive scope for local adaptation. The core-programme, if it is to succeed at all, must ensure that school activities and practices are made community-wide in their effects; that is, these activities and practices are to be duly participated in and enjoyed by at least a significant part of the local community including teachers and pupils. The schools are to function as important centres of the local society, building up friendly ties among people through the formation and functioning of a duly formed '*parent-teacher-association*', student-clubs, etc., and through the organisation and execution of a well planned programme.

of recreational & cultural activities and of social & even religious practices. In fact, the schools are to function as the 'heart' of the local community.

The first fundamental point to remember in this connection is that unless we can make provision for sufficient 'doing' on the part of pupils, their personality traits cannot be initiated or developed adequately. The core-programme would give the pupils greater scope for self-expression and activity. The problems of community life and living, the solutions of which demand practical work or actual practices on the part of children invariably make the school life a real part of the normal life around.

The second point to be noted is that the work-programme of the school should be executed in such a way that pupils get sufficient opportunities to develop skills in the techniques of being, thinking and working with other people in proper democratic spirit. The core-curriculum, in its true sense, usually offers a living-together-type of situation and inspires in the individual a feeling of belongingness which is so very essential for co-operative living and thus it helps the pupils learn how to get along with others in various types of work and in diverse social settings. The group-study method which is basically related to the core curriculum is not only helpful for developing the children's personality but it also results in higher grade achievement for the majority of learners.

(12). The quality of relationship between teacher and pupils, teacher and teacher, teacher and parents as well as between the school and the society determines to a great extent the type of personality the children will grow into.

Besides, we may have to introduce some changed methods of teaching and these methodological changes may even require some readjustment of the syllabuses. The class-to-class syllabus of a particular subject (say, mathematics, mother language, etc.) and in respect of a particular stage (say, junior high or higher secondary) may have to be recast in accordance with the accepted principles of educational psychology. Methods of teaching will have to be so devised and followed that they relate the course-content to children's life, create interest and initiative in the learners and develop their power of thinking and reasoning. Not only should these methods culminate in lively discussions and inspiring group-work, they should also aim at arousing original thinking in pupils and at providing opportunities for teachers to observe their pupils most closely and intimately in order to note their developing interests and personality traits.



We may now pass on to the knotty problem of rating the pupils in respect of these personality

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(12) Group Study and Achievement—*J. Educ. Psychol.*, June, 1958, pp. 118-23.

traits which are developed in them so strenuously.

The first question that engages our attention is how to make the ratings or assessments objective and reliable. It is really regretted that satisfactory measurement of these personality traits has not gone far enough. The majority of related tests have not been found so very reliable and valid as would justify their inclusion in a test programme proper. Our teachers, again, mostly lack in the training and experience necessary for such a test programme even if we devise one. We have, therefore, to rely on teachers' ratings and estimates. But teachers making these estimates or doing these ratings should be properly trained for the purpose.

A few difficulties are usually experienced in regard to making these *personality-ratings* reliable and valid. First, we are not very clear about the meanings of these personality traits. Some would define a trait in this way, some in another. These variations in 'concepts' are likely to result in differences of estimates or ratings. Our primary task should, therefore, be to arrive at an agreed definition of the traits included in the card and the definitions should preferably be made in terms of concrete behaviours or behaviour-manifestations.

It has often been found that the meaning of a trait becomes clearer for all practical purposes if it is viewed from the two extremes, the positive and the negative. For example, an individual of 'initiative' may be described as one who is energetically (or

even aggressively) enterprising, presses forward in life, can progress independently, is pushing or self-assertive, is ready to come forward to give a start to any work or project, shows originality of ideas ; whereas an individual lacking in *initiative* may be described as one who lags behind in most cases, wants to follow and never wants to lead, feels helpless without guidance or direction, is hesitant to do anything new. Similarly, an individual of '*emotional balance*' may be described as one who is poised, calm and composed, stable in temperament, has a balanced personality (i. e. behaves properly even under provocation), is not unduly (or easily) excited, agitated or depressed, is mostly cheerful in nature, can exercise control over emotions ; whereas an individual lacking in *emotional balance* may be described as one who is very easily moved to fits of temper (loose-tempered), easily excited or depressed, highly irritable, oversensitive or sentimental, impatient or intolerant. If, in this way, we can arrive at an agreed definition of the trait-concepts in more or less behavioural terms, much of the subjectivity-factor would be controlled to our satisfaction.

The second difficulty in rating personality traits is that children behave differently in different situations and with different persons. Manifestations of these traits in children may also vary because of the children playing different *roles* in life—the *role* in the school, in the home and in the local

community, the role with class mates, club-mates and school-mates (senior & junior), the role with teachers of different subjects and of different personalities and so on. To minimise this difficulty, we may have the ratings on personality traits from as many teachers as possible, specially from teachers who would be doing the core subjects and the core programme. The class teachers should always be in charge of compiling these separate ratings and of coming to an agreed decision, at the end of each session, with the help of those teachers who have got greater opportunities to observe the pupils in different situations and in different roles.

The third difficulty is related to the 'halo' effect. As we know, pupils rated high in respect of a particular trait may also be rated high in respect of another trait, if the results of the first rating are kept before us at the time of the second or subsequent ratings. The 'halo' effect may also be due to our prejudice or bias either in regard to individual persons or in regard to particular traits of personality. For example, if I love Ram or if I have got some biased feeling in his favour, I may be rating Ram high in respect of all the traits. Again, if I am prejudiced about the contribution of intelligence or some such factors like, say, general proficiency, I may be rating the most intelligent pupil (or the pupil securing proficiency in the examinations) very high in respect of all the personality traits. It is clear therefore, that while doing the rating we

should try to be as much impartial and unbiased as possible and treat the different traits of personality as independent of one another. We may observe the following principles to our advantage :

- (i) We should always rate the pupils trait-wise.
- (ii) While rating the pupils in respect of a particular trait, we should always keep the whole class or group in view.

In other words, we will take up only one trait at a time, say, '*industry*' and then, keeping in view the entire group of pupils of a particular class and at the same time constantly keeping before us the definition of the trait-concept of *industry*, we will first spot out the individuals who should be placed very high (A) or very low (E). Thereafter, we will locate the individuals who should be placed in the C (average), B (a little above average) and D (a little below average) categories. We should also note in this connection the approximate percentage of a population falling under each category—A, B, C, D & E. In a normal population, the corresponding percentages are roughly A=5, B=25, C=40, D=25, E=5. But we must take care not to categorise those individuals in respect of whom we know so very little that we may not feel justified to rate them altogether. We may preferably add a new column-'not rated', where the above individuals may be provisionally placed in order that the class-teachers may subsequently create

suitable opportunities for observing them in future. If, however, we want to do the rating on a three-point scale, we should make the necessary adaptations. We are to select the high group and the low group first and then the rest would go to the average group. (A few pupils may be placed in the 'not rated' category.) The corresponding percentages will then be :—

A=15-20% =high or good

B=60-70% =average

C=15-20% =low or poor.

We have mentioned earlier the difficulties that are there in regard to judging the personality of children very objectively. It may be that inspite of all possible precautions our ratings on personality traits would not attain a satisfactorily high degree of objectivity and, as such, we may not be justified to use these ratings for very serious purposes. We should, however, bear in mind that all these ratings are primarily meant for (i) helping the children in their progressive development through grades, (ii) advising the parents in matters that concern them most and (iii) assisting the teacher-counsellors to understand the children better.

A suitable form for rating the pupils traitwise is given below :

# Rating of Personality Traits

**( On a three point scale )\***

( Each trait should be entered in a separate sheet of paper )

	( above average )	( average )	( below average )
<b>Initiative</b>	Usually does things of one's own accord ; takes the lead ; pushing ; often comes forward to undertake a new project or work.		Almost always follows others ; waits for other's instructions ; wants to be guided by others.
<b>Industry</b>	Hardworking ; persevering ; painstaking ; can work well inspite of difficulties or distractions.	( average )	( below average ) Lazy ; often gives up in the face of difficulties or distractions ; works only leisurely.
<b>Responsibility</b>	( above average ) Dependable ; dutiful even under trying circumstances ; can be relied on.	( average )	( below average ) Not at all dependable ; a shirker ; unmindful of one's duty.

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\* For samples of such definitions on a five point scale, please consult the Educational Research Pamphlet 'Cumulative Records' by Dr. C.M. Fleming—University of London Press Ltd., 1951, pp 13-15.

<b>Emotional balance</b>	( above average )	( average )	( below average )
	Calm and composed; does not usually give way to extreme emotions; has control over emotions; not easily irritated or excited.		Easily excited or irritated; oversensitive; sentimental; restless and disturbed; loose-tempered.
<b>Self-confidence</b>	( above average )	( average )	( below average )
	Has faith on one's own judgement and power; bold and firm; does things in a confident manner; steadily faces problem-situations.		Nervous and timid; hesitating in new situations; apprehensive; unsteady.
<b>Cooperativeness</b>	( above average )	( average )	( below average )
	Eager to lend a helping hand to others; enjoys working with others; sociable; sympathetic and helpful.		Does not help others; selfish; does not like to work with other people.
<b>Work-habits</b>	( above average )	( average )	( below average )
	Systematic; methodical; neat; regular; careful; punctual.		Untidy; careless; works in a slip-shod manner; irregular; whimsical.

## H. Family Background and Home Circumstances :

The home-influences are in no way less important than school-influences, so far as pupils' educational achievements are concerned. It is often suggested that a clear knowledge of the pupils' family background and home circumstances is also expected to be of great help towards understanding the general make-up of their personality, specially their needs and aspirations.

The socio-economic condition of the family, the attitudes of parents towards the school and its functions, the educational background and the occupational status of the family go a long way to help us estimate the nature and amount of encouragement or opportunity that a pupil is likely to enjoy in his family. From the 'follow-back' enquiry of 1952-53, conducted by the National Foundation for Educational Research in England and Wales (13), we come to know that a child's success in a secondary school is determined, to some extent, by the degree of security, affection and encouragement that is provided at home by its parents or guardians.

Information about the family background and home circumstances may be collected on the following lines :

(13) N. F. E. R. in England Wales.—Allocation Studies II,  
1952-53.

- (i) Educational background of the family  
(Highly satisfactory, satisfactory, fair, just so so, poor) ... ... ... ...
- (ii) Occupations of parents, elder brothers & sisters and guardians, if any... ...
- (iii) Family interests of special note  
(linguistic and literary, scientific, artistic, musical, business-minded, agricultural, educational, etc.) ... ...
- (iv) Whether family circumstances permit further education of advanced nature... ...
- (v) Occupational career contemplated in respect of the pupil concerned ...

*I. Special Merits and/or Disabilities (if any) :*

Over and above the various types of information entered in the foregoing sections of the record card, a special note may be made about the outstanding merits (or talents) and/or serious disabilities (if any) of the individual child. This note is expected to be of great use to the educators when they would plan to provide adequate opportunities for the pupil's total development. The biographical reports, the school achievement and conduct, the work-samples, etc. of the pupil may indicate fairly clearly the outstanding talents or specific disabilities of the pupil. Of course, the majority of children will not show any such talent or disability ; but still we should look out for it as best as we can.

*J. Teachers' Suggestions or Recommendations (in regard to future course of action—educational or vocational) :*

The '1951 follow-up' study (13) of the National Foundation for Educational Research in England and Wales (referred to earlier) showed that the secondary school performance of the majority of children might be predicted equally successfully by teachers' estimates as by the scores obtained from a battery of intelligence and attainment tests.

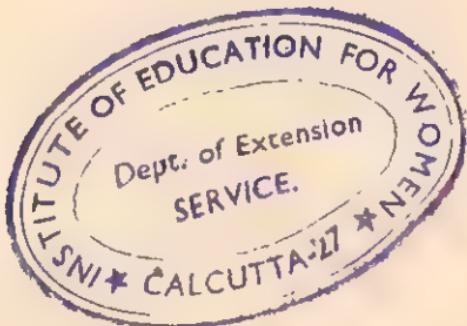
We may accordingly ask our teachers to record at the end of the junior high school stage (i.e. towards the end of class VIII of our school system) their considered views in regard to the potentiality of each pupil. They should suggest whether it would be wise on the part of the pupil to go in for higher secondary education or he would better change over to vocational education of practical nature or even take to jobs proper. We believe that after three years of 'cumulative study' of the children, our teachers will be in a very good position to make useful recommendations about their future career.

The related information may be obtained on the following lines :

- (i) Special notes about educational achievement (if any)      ...      ...      ...      ...
- (ii) Whether higher secondary education is recommended      ...      ...      ...      ...

- (iii) Subjects or subject-areas recommended for further study ... ... ...
  - (iv) Type of vocational training (or job) recommended ... ... ...
- \* \* \* \*

We have now come to the end of our discourse. We know that many of our suggestions would trouble the minds of our educators. It is not even unlikely that the heads and other teachers of our secondary schools may feel rather embarrassed when most of their initial attempts in this direction would end in a "blooming buzzing confusion". But we need not be discouraged. Our eagerness and sincerity, our interest and effort would surely bring us the desired success with all its glory.



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# A Cumulative Record Card Fully Illustrated

## I Personal Data :

Name of the pupil	...	...	...	A. D.
Name of the father	...	...	...	A. D.
Name of the guardian	...	...	...	A. D.
Address (Permanent)	...	...	...	X
(Present)	...	...	...	X
Date of birth	...	...	...	26. 8. 47
Name of the school	...	...	...	B. G. S.
(Present)	...	...	...	S. J. D. S.
(Previously attended)	...	...	...	
Enrolled in class VI	...	...	...	1958
Promoted to class VII	...	...	...	1959
Promoted to class VIII	...	...	...	1960

## II Physical characteristics and qualities :

	1958	1959	1960
Height	58"	60 $\frac{1}{2}$ "	61 $\frac{1}{2}$ "
Weight	...	1 md. 9 srs.	1 md. 17 srs.
Chest	...		Ordinary 31" Expand. 33"
Teeth	Good	Good	Good
Vision	Good	Good	Good
Hearing	Good	Good	Good
Strength of the physique	Good	Good	Good
Capacity for hard work	Fair	Fair	Fair
Physical disabilities	None	None	None
General health-rating (Excellent, good, fair, not satisfactory, poor)	Good	Good	Good
Remarks (if any)	No sick-leave taken	No sick-leave taken	A week's leave taken on a/c of broken wrist from accident

## III

Educational achievements :  
(A) School examination results :

		1958		1959		1960	
Subjects	Average marks obtained in %	Rank in the class with the total no. of students	Average marks obtained in %	Rank in the class with the total no. of students	Average marks obtained in %	Rank in the class with the total no. of students	
Bengali	60.5	31.5/117	63.75	13.5/122	58.5	10/124	
English	64	21/117	55.75	19/122	51.5	31/124	
Sanskrit	38.5	28/117	78	7.5/122	48	43/124	
Hindi	64	20/117	x		x		
Mathematics	86.5	12/117	72	15.5/122	95	6.5/124	
History	70.5	78/117	60	9/122	68	5.5/124	
Geography	79.5	5/117	66	6.5/122	84	1.5/124	
General Science	57	17.5/117	61.5	13.5/122	74	9.5/124	
Hygiene	x	x			x		
Drawing	x	x	25.5	25/122	22	39/124	
Crafts	x	x			x		
General Knowledge	x	x			x		
etc. etc.							

(B) Teachers' estimates :

- (a) Subjects in respect of which the pupil's work is much above the average.....
- (b) Subjects in respect of which the pupil's work is much below the average.....
- (c) Subjects or subject-areas in which the pupil's work demands special attention (both bright and dark side of the issue may be considered).....
- (d) Standard of the pupil's performance in mother-tongue—excellent, good, fair, not satisfactory or poor.....
- (e) Standard of the pupil's performance in mathematics—excellent, good, fair, not satisfactory or poor.....

	1958	1959	1960
Maths	Berg. Geog. G.Sc.	Maths, Geog. G.Sc.	Maths, Geog. G.Sc.
nil	nil	nil	nil
Maths, Geog.	Maths, Geog. G.Sc.	Maths, Geog. Science	Maths, Geog. Science
Good	Good	Good	Good
Excellent	Good	Good	Excellent

(C) Standardised attainment tests :

Name of the tests :

	1958	1959	1960
Not yet	introduced		

IV Results of psychological tests :

Name of the test :

	1958	1959	1960
Not yet	introduced		

#### V Coccourricular activities :

Name of the activity	1958	1959	1960
Debates	Average	Average	Average
Games and Sports	Average	Average	Average
Magazine		Average	Average
Drama/ Recitation			
Music/Dancing			
Social Service			
Gardening			
Art & Craft			
Sewing/Embroidery			
N. O. C.			
Etc.			Average
Remarks, if any			

#### VI Interest-trends :

Dominant interest  
(or interests) as per the  
list given below :

Literary, scientific,  
mechanical, mathematical,  
business-minded,  
social welfare, religious,  
musical, artistic, outdoor,  
domestic, agricultural,  
etc.

1958	1959	1960
Library organisation (Notes obtained from the class library)	Out-door (sports) from the Organised a cricket club	(1) Scientific (2) Out-door (sports) parents) Cricket, Swimming, Organised a science club
Effective participation in organising the Stamp collection	Learning to swim	

## VII. Disposition and Personality traits:

VIII. Family background and Home circumstances : (From notes obtained from the parents)

- |   |  |
|---|--|
| (i) Educational background of the family :<br>(Please check only one)<br>Highly satisfactory, satisfactory, fair, just so so, poor,       | Highly satisfactory                                      |
| (ii) Occupations of parents, elder brothers and sisters or guardians, if any :  | Father—Retired Meteorologist<br>Mother—Education Service |
| (iii) Family interests of special note :<br><br>Literary, Scientific, Artistic, Musical, Business-minded, Agricultural, Educational, etc. | Literary, Scientific, Educational                        |
| (iv) Whether family circumstances permit further education of advanced nature :   | Yes  |
| (v) Occupational career contemplated in respect of the pupil concerned :  | Any suitable scientific career.                          |

IX. Special merits and/or disabilities, if any

X. Teachers' suggestions or recommendations (in regard to future course of action—educational or vocational) :

- |   |   |
|---|---|
| (i) Special notes about educational achievement, if any         | Scientific aptitude (as seen by the teacher)  |
| (ii) Whether higher secondary education is recommended          | Very good comprehension and intelligence (as seen by parents)                               |
| (iii) Subjects or subject-areas recommended for further study : | Steady progress in Science, Math & Geog. suggests that he may be encouraged in those areas. |
| (iv) Type of vocational training (or job) recommended           | Yes   |
|   | Science subjects  |
|   | Research & Administration in the field of science   |

Signature of  
the Class Teacher

Signature of  
the Teacher-Counsellor

Signature of  
the Headmaster.

\* The author is indebted to the teacher counsellor, the class teacher (Class VIII) and the headmaster of the school concerned for their active help in the matter of getting the card fully illustrated. He also thanks the parents of the child concerned for their useful co-operation.

**How to plan the work-programme of the school for maintaining the record card properly :**

1. Provision of a class teacher for each of the classes ( or sections, if required).
2. Class teachers are to meet their respective classes for 10-15 minutes each working day, just at the start. Provision for this period may be made in the time-table.
3. Class teachers are to be made responsible for making all the entries in respect of the card. Some of the sections may be entered by them independently.
4. Teachers in charge of different subjects in a class are to make estimates of achievements of the pupils concerned and to do the averaging of marks as well as the ranking of pupils in respect of the corresponding subjects.
5. The cocurricular activities of the school may be all planned towards the beginning of the sessions and at least one teacher may be associated with each activity.
6. The student-leaders in respect of different activities may be periodically changed in order to afford facilities to a greater number of pupils for manifestation of useful traits of personality.
7. Teachers associated with different cocurricular activities (hobby clubs, etc., if there be any) are to organise the activities regularly and also to help the class teachers make the corresponding entries in the cards.
8. In regard to personality traits and interests, the class teachers should be assisted by
  - (a) a teacher who is very closely associated with the class ;
  - (b) a teacher either associated with the cocurricular activities of the school or related in a very close manner with the pupil's life outside the school.
- The class teacher will, however, have to give the final rating in consultation with the head of the school or his/her deputee.
9. Group-work in respect of each class may be periodically arranged to offer facilities for better (i) observation, (ii) pupil-pupil relationship, (iii) pupil-teacher relationship.
10. Major functions of the school may be organised in a manner that would help develop a happy parent-teacher relationship.
11. An individual file for each pupil should contain all useful notes about the pupil during the session.
12. The names of pupils (by classes or by sections) and the rating scales for personality traits, interests, etc., may be printed (or cyclostyled) for distribution among the members of the staff as and when required.

## ERRATA

Page	Line	Read	For
5	27	should	shouid
9	4	utilised	utilsed
9	13	such	sneh
11	11	comprehensiveness	comperhenaiveness
12	13	background	back-ground
16	13	strictly	stricly
21	footnote	author	anthonr
42	20	age	ago
42	29	standpoint	stand point
45	16	sub-units	submits
45	17	course	esurse
47	23	themselves.	thesemselvses
55	1	class-mates	class mates

